

The Chronicle and Index

OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY, BELFAST.

No. 3.]

BELFAST, MARCH 1st, 1881,

[For Gratuitous Circulation

WE are glad to give our readers a preliminary announcement about the celebration of the Jubilee of the Society, and we hope they will all note the dates carefully, and keep themselves free from any other engagements. The days fixed for the celebration are *Sunday, April 24th, and the Monday and Tuesday following*. It is with great pleasure we announce that the *Rev. Henry W. Crosskey, F.G.S.*, of Birmingham, has consented to preach on the occasion, in Second Rosemary Street, Belfast. The fame of the preacher, and his fidelity to the cause of Liberal Religion, will be sure to command for him a large and appreciative audience. The Committee are also trying to procure an exchange of pulpits, so that in various places there may be a simultaneous celebration of the Jubilee, and appeals made on behalf of the Society.

Invitations have been sent to many of our denominational and Sunday-school organizations, asking them to send representatives to our gathering, and we have little doubt we shall have the pleasure of welcoming many of the friends of religious truth and freedom at our meetings. We hope to give the names of some of these in our next issue.

The precise arrangements for the meetings are not yet completed; but they will probably include a Breakfast; a Conference; the Annual Meeting of the Society; a Sunday-school gathering, and a Soiree. We are counting upon the co-operation of our country friends, and we feel sure that we shall not be disappointed. We hope a spirit of earnestness and enthusiasm will be called forth on the occasion, and that permanent good will result from the meetings.

We note with pleasure that one of the active members of our Committee, Thomas McClelland, Esq., who is also a member of the Committee of the Second Congregation, has been appointed by Her Majesty's Government as a Justice of the Peace, and that, amid the good wishes and welcomes of the practising solicitors and the magistrates, he has taken his seat upon the Bench. We trust he may long be spared to administer the law with justice and gentleness.

The Committee of the Unitarian Society, at their meeting, February 18th, had many matters of an encouraging nature before them, and they were busy in their arrangements for the celebration of the Jubilee. Every department of the Society is under efficient direction, and it is satisfactory to know that the sales at the Depository continue to improve. The Committee are resolved to make this part of their operations even more efficient by securing that the best books on free religious thought, published either in England or America, shall always be readily procurable. They invite their friends to co-operate with them in making this effort successful.

The Sunday Evening Lectures at Second Rosemary Street, Belfast, during the month of February, have been as follows:—*Rev. T. Dunckerley, B.A.*, lectured on “The Word of God,” and the *Rev. J. C. Street* on the following subjects:—“Doctrinal Trusts and the Law of the Land;” “Ought the dead to control the living?” “Jesus and Christianity?”

Though the weather has been very inclement on several occasions, the attendance was encouraging, and on some of the evenings very large. Copies of the *Chronicle and Index* are distributed after the Lectures.

INTELLIGENCE.

On Sunday, February 20th, the *Rev. J. C. Street* preached a Special Sermon in the Church of the Second Congregation, on “Seedtime and Harvest,” and a collection was afterwards made on behalf of the Sunday-school. In the course of his sermon he referred to the death of Miss Currell, of Abbey Hill, who, at a very advanced age, had passed to her rest a few days before. He spoke of her pure and noble character, and the sweet graces which shone forth throughout her life, and held up her intelligent interest in all matters of religious life and thought, and her unswerving fidelity to her principles and profession, as an example to those who were now growing up, and would have to fill the vacant

places, as the old standard-bearers one by one passed away. He then passed on in his discourse to speak of the seed-time of life, and dwelt upon the great work which was committed to each generation in the training and development of its successors. The amount of the collection was in excess of former years.

On Thursday, 10th February, a most successful and enthusiastic Soiree was held at Glenarm, to celebrate the presentation of a beautiful Watch and Chain to Miss Charles, as a small token of gratitude for her very valuable services in conducting the psalmody and presiding at the harmonium of this old congregation.

The Rev. J. Calwell, Pastor loci, presided, and about 140 persons were present. The Revs. J. Jellie and J. Kennedy, and Mr. M'Calmont, of Belfast, gave addresses, and Mr. S. Magill enlivened the proceedings by several readings.

At the usual Weekly Meeting of the Rosemary Street Mutual Improvement Association, held on Monday evening, 31st January, a programme of music and readings was rendered by the members, in a manner which gave much enjoyment to those present. The musical evenings during this session have been largely attended, and have given general satisfaction.

On the 7th February Mr. J. D. Magee read a paper on "Political and Religious Liberty." The essayist treated the subject with the fearless earnestness which it deserved, and a lively debate on the subject followed.

On the 14th February, there was a large attendance of members and friends to hear the Rev. J. C. Street lecture on "The Irish Land Question." The lecturer having described the present state of Ireland, and the various influences which had led thereto, proposed the following remedies for the grievances which exist:—(1) the abolition of the law of primogeniture and entail; (2) a simple and inexpensive mode of registration of ownerships of land; (3) as easy a mode of transferring land as now exists for transferring shares; (4) the taking possession by the Government at a fair valuation of the eight million acres of waste and semi-waste lands, and enabling tenants on easy terms to become owners; and (5) by giving fixity of tenure in every case. At the conclusion an animated and prolonged discussion took place, and the proceedings were brought to a close with a vote of thanks to the lecturer.

On February 21st an interesting lecture was delivered by Rev. J. J. Wright, on "The humour and pathos of Bret Harte." The lecturer commenced by giving a biographical sketch of this singular American writer, and then proceeded to read excerpts from his poetical and prose works, some of which are exceedingly droll, and others wonderfully pathetic. At the conclusion a vote of thanks to the lecturer was passed by acclamation.

THE SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING of the Mountpottinger Church was held at the close of Morning Service, on Sunday, 13th February, 1881.

The chair was occupied by JOHN SCOTT, Esq., who, after a few remarks, called upon the Secretary, Mr. JAMES M'WILLIAMS, to read the Report for 1880.

We extract these specially interesting passages from that Report.

"It is with pleasure and hope that your Committee present this, the Sixth Annual Report of Mountpottinger Church. We rejoice to say that our Church, Sunday School, and all connected Institutions are active and flourishing.

The Building Debt of about £250, which, since our present substantial and convenient Meeting House and Reading Room were erected, six years ago, had lain as a burden upon us, is now paid. We are entirely free from debt, thanks to the united and earnest efforts of our Minister and Church Members, and to our many friends in town and country who so generously assisted us with their subscriptions.

Our report of this, the greatest event of the year with us, would not be complete without tendering our very warmest gratitude to all who have in any way helped us to accomplish our heart's desire. Especially are our thanks due to E. P. Cowan, Esq., J.P., who sent us a cheque for £20; to S. C. Davidson, Esq., who helped us with a cheque for £25; and to Dr. Ritchie, J.P., who headed the list with £100. The contractors for the stonework of our buildings had sent in their account, from which we found we were charged interest on the amount due them; this Dr. Ritchie also cleared off. The architect's account amounted to £67 5s 10d., was furnished us; this Dr. Ritchie also paid himself, and enabled us to get entirely rid of all our hindrances.

It will be remembered that some seven years ago a deputation waited upon Dr. Ritchie, asking him to grant a lease for a plot of ground, it being by far the best site, in the very heart of this district, for a church. In answer to that deputation, the Doctor promised to give the whole corner plot of ground at a nominal rent, provided a handsome stone-built church were erected within a reasonable time. An appeal was made for money, and about £1,200 were collected. As this was not sufficient to erect the church desired, rather than plunge hopelessly into debt, the Committee determined, and were advised by Dr. Ritchie, to put up instead this smaller, but quite as substantial and sufficiently ornate, building.

We think that committee was wise in what it did. We have found the present building, which, by certain alterations, will seat 300 people, convenient to all our necessities; and your Committee, after a good deal of consideration, wish to suggest to you the advisability of devoting our beautiful place here wholly to Divine Service. By building another room above the Reading Room, &c., we can obtain ample accommodation for

our Sunday School ; and we are happy to report that Dr. Ritchie offers to give us ground for all our needs at the nominal rent of £1 a year.

We understand that the Lease has since been signed by the Trustees and Grantor.

The Annual Meeting of the Members of the Church of the Second Congregation, Belfast, took place on Wednesday, 23rd. After tea, the Chair was taken in the Lecture Hall by T. McClelland, Esq., J.P., who expressed his regret at the absence of the Mayor ; but said that he was gratified that the honour had been conferred upon him of presiding at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation. In the Report read by the Secretary, John Ritchie, Esq., a full account was given of the work of the Church during the past year. They extract a few paragraphs :—

“Your Committee refer with pleasure to the Reports presented herewith from the Sunday School, Music, Library, and Vigilance Committees, which are of a satisfactory and progressive character. The Members of these Committees merit the heartiest thanks of the Congregation for their useful labours.”

“The Mutual Improvement Association continues its activity and usefulness. The past year has been more than usually successful.”

“Your Committee are glad to report that the Sunday Evening Lectures were resumed by your Minister on the first Sunday in October, and that they have, as usual, attracted the attention of large congregations. Unfortunately they were interrupted for a short time by the illness of your Minister, but your Committee rejoice to report the restoration of Mr. Street’s health, and the resumption by him of all his active duties. The Evening Lectures cannot fail to exert an important influence upon those who are regularly attending them.”

“The Ladies of the Congregation have continued during the winter their praiseworthy labours on behalf of the poor. Week by week they have met to work with their own hands, as well as to supply work to poor women who otherwise would have suffered great privation. They have also been able to supply clothing to many needy families, and at Christmas time, through the kindness of some of their number, blankets were given to the destitute, and a little gift of groceries and money was made to various families who were greatly in need. Most of the money for these purposes was contributed by the Ladies themselves, who, thus by gifts and labours, consecrated themselves to the service of the poor. Contributions for this useful Society would be gladly received by your Minister.”

“The year that has passed has been marked by many changes. Out of our number the young and the strong, full of promise, and the aged and weak, whose useful lives had ripened, have been taken away ; some of our members have left town, others have left Ireland. We have parted with them all with deep regret. But your Committee rejoice in being able to offer a cordial welcome to many new members who fill the vacant places, and who seem anxious to prove themselves worthy successors of those who through good and ill report, have been faithful to the principles of our Free Church. Your Committee go forth hopefully to meet the future.

After the ordinary business had been transacted, the following resolution was moved by Mr. James M. Darbishire in a speech characterised by much feeling and sympathy :—

“That we gratefully acknowledge the valuable and eminently successful labors of our beloved Pastor, the Rev. James C. Street, during his ten years’ ministration among us : we desire to assure him of our earnest hope that he may long be spared to contribute to us the advantage of his spiritual, moral, and liberal teaching, which has so materially contributed to the building-up of our living and united Church.”

Mr. John R. Neill seconded the resolution, and the Chairman, in putting it to the meeting, expressed the deep sense of gratitude they as a Congregation felt to Mr. Street for his valuable labours since he came amongst them.

The resolution was adopted by the meeting with the utmost heartiness and enthusiasm, and suitably acknowledged by Mr. Street.

BOOK NOTICES.

“*Ten Sermons of Religion and Prayers*,” by THEODORE PARKER.

A book which should be near at hand for frequent use. One more helpful in the stimulation of lofty thought and the inspiration of holy deeds, it would be impossible to possess. Every sentence is alive and sparkling, and every thought glitters with the pure gold of truth. There is solid thinking for the mentally robust, fact for the most sober-minded, delicate fancy for the esthetic, comfort for the sorrowful, and helpfulness for all ; and the prayers are the outpourings of a nature that seemed always to be in communion with God. The light of heaven streams upon the pages.

To be had at the Depository for 2/.

“*Stories from the Book of Genesis*,” by RICHARD BARTRAM, London, 1881.

We offer a warm welcome to Mr. Bartram’s book. In Bible language it tells the Bible stories, but it accompanies them with such a setting as makes it easy for teachers and scholars to free themselves from the bondage of Bible worship, and to enter into the true spirit of the ancient story tellers. The true lessons are finely caught and told, and the modern reader is captivated by the freshness of stories that belong to the most venerable past. We commend the book to all our Sunday-schools. It will prove invaluable as a class book, giving just the helps which many teachers want, and supplying to the scholars a most pleasant and attractive introduction to the real study of the Bible.

It may be had at the Depository for 10d.

“*Spring Sunbeams*.” Second Edition 1d.

This is a little book of bright, happy, heart-stirring hymns for children. The compiler, who

has evidently garnered in many fields, European and American, quite understands what young human nature needs. Hymns of sad experiences, of gloomy doubts, of whining complaints, of bitter anxieties, griefs and failures, such as only can be felt and known by much older minds and souls, he would not have the children made to sing, for such hymns to children must be unreal, even if not frightsome to their susceptible natures. The hymns in this little book are indeed fresh and lively as the "Spring," and sparkling as "Sunbeams." We can speak from experience, and say that a band of Sunday-school children singing these hymns is one of the most gladsome and wholesome things we know. Already this little book is used by many of our Sunday-schools in England, Scotland, and Ireland; amongst the latter we may mention Mountpottinger, Comber, Larne, Moneyrea, Rademon, &c.

One excellent feature we note in this second edition is that a tune has been selected for each hymn. This saves a superintendent a great amount of trouble. The tunes are mostly found in a tune book called "Sunnyside," which costs only 1/2. The hymn book may be had at the Depository for Sunday-schools at 10d a dozen.

"Philocristus."

The author of this remarkable book is a scholar, a thinker, and a deeply religious man. After reading these chapters one goes back to the New Testament and finds it a fresh book. Writing as a Hebrew who himself lived in the days of Jesus, he tells us in quaint, native words how, though always a "Sin-Fearer," he, with many of these times, who dwelt in the land of the fathers, felt that the faith given to them by Moses was become a thing of much outwardness, having lost its inwardness. We are placed among these serious-hearted Hebrews, wondering whether the "All-Merciful (blessed is He)," will send yet another prophet. And then chapter after chapter we read of this writer's discipleship to the Master whom he found, and whose words, journeys, deeds, and pains he describes in pages so beautifully spiritual that we cannot too highly recommend the book.

Published at 12/-; can be had at the Depository for 9/-

The Treasurer of the Unitarian Society begs to acknowledge the following Subscriptions for 1880:—

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And for 1881.

Miss Grace H. Coe, ...	0	5	0
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Errata.—The names of Messrs. W. D. Henderson and Augustus Jennings were entered in the previous List of Subscribers by mistake.

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THE stories are given in the very language of Scripture, and the comments are simple, as they should be for children, at the same time they are explanatory and interesting. . . . The author is nowhere dogmatic and everywhere reverent.—*Louth Times*.

Every story is mainly told in the words of the Bible, but always with interpositions and explanations that are singularly reasonable and suggestive. . . . The little book is one of practical value for both house and school.—*Truthseeker*.

To the large class of Liberal Christians who are not oblivious to the revelations of modern science, and who yet recognise a soul of beauty and truthfulness in the ancient Hebrew books, it must often be a difficult question as to the way in which certain portions of Old Testament shall be presented to their children. Sooner or later these children must become acquainted with the scientific facts with which every educated man or woman is now familiar, and the doubt cannot but have occurred whether it is not better that the way should be prepared beforehand than that it should be reached by a violent intellectual revulsion. To those who have felt this difficulty we commend Mr. BARTRAM's little book.—*Echo*.

THE design of Mr. BARTRAM is to offer a species of simplified version of this Book for the use of young children, in which, without raising at all the question of its inspiration or Divine authority as a part of the Scripture, he treats it simply as a narrative of events. The work is done throughout in a distinctly reverential spirit.—*Scotsman*.

MR. BARTRAM has written a capital little manual, from one book of the Bible, which we can heartily commend. There is little in this work but what every teacher or parent may read with great distinctness to the young.—*Christian Life*.

MR. BARTRAM has performed a difficult task with good judgment. His comments are clear and simply expressed.—*Unitarian Herald*.

LONDON:

Sunday School Association, 37 Norfolk Street, Strand, W.C.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN

Unitarian Association

CHRIST the Revealer. By J. H. Thom. 2s 6d

The Soul's Way to God, and other Sermons: By C. Beard, B.A. 2s 6d

The Prophets and their Interpreters. By Dr. G. Vance Smith. 6d
 Conscience and Faith. By Ath. Coquerel. Translated by J. E. Odgers, M.A. 2s 6d

History of the Dogma of the Deity of Jesus Christ. By Dr. Reville. 4s

The Life and Writings of Theodore Parker. By Dr. Reville. Translated by Dr. Beard. 1s 6d

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 Dr. Channing's Works. 3s 6d. Larger Type, 5s. Centenary edition, paper covers, 1s

Report of an Official Visit to Transylvania in 1879. By Alex. Gordon, M.A. 3d

The Desolation of Jerusalem. By Richard Armstrong, B.A. 2d
 Not to Destroy but to Fulfil. Sermon at the recent Saratoga Conference. By P. W. Clayden. 1d

These and other Unitarian Books and Tracts will be sent free at the prices named. Catalogues sent post free.

* * * The object of the Association is "to promote the principles of Unitarian Christianity. Besides publishing books and tracts, of which it distributes annually a large number in grants, it gives aid to congregations, and towards the support of Missions, in various parts of the United Kingdom. The ordinary annual subscription entitling to membership is one guinea; and for ministers, 5s. Payments to the Local Treasurers, or to the Secretary, the Rev. Henry Jerson, M.A., at the Office, 37 Norfolk St., Strand, London.

IRISH UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN SOCIETY.

Tracts illustrative of the Principles of Unitarian Christianity will be forwarded free of charge to religious inquirers, on application to the Secretary, 12 Stephen's green, West, Dublin.

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NOTICE OF REMOVAL.

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(ESTABLISHED 1866)

The Proprietor has the great satisfaction to inform visitors from the country and the public generally, that the magnificent building (specially constructed to provide increased accommodation for the business of the Castle Restaurant) is now nearly completed, and will be

Opened During the Present Month,

Unless delayed by the severity of the weather.

Pending the completion and fitting up of the new building, business will be carried on as usual at the well-known premises 31 Castle Lane.

The precise date of opening the new premises will be duly announced in the local news-papers.

GEORGE FISHER,

PROPRIETOR.

THE CASTLE CAFE AND RESTAURANT,

1st February, 1881.

Printed by Moat Brothers, 11 Rosemary St., for the Unitarian Society, and Published at their Depository, 33 Donegall Street, Belfast.